

CHARLESTON GREEN

The Science

There is significant scientific evidence for global warming. Human activity has increased the levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in our atmosphere from 280 parts per million (pre-industrialization) to the current level of 380 parts per million. The source of this rise in atmospheric CO₂ is the burning of oil, coal and natural gas. Scientific data shows that this rise in CO₂ is directly related to higher global average temperatures due to the greenhouse gas effect. The consequences of climate change can already be seen via intensified hurricanes, increased frequency and intensity of heat waves, drought and wildfires. This information and more can be found at <http://climateconversation.org/docs/evidence.pdf>.

The Planning Team

The City of Charleston has created the **Staff Green Team**, comprised of interested City employees from all City departments and the **Charleston Green Committee**, composed of community stakeholders in the broader community. The Green Committee members, with their knowledge and expertise, will form a comprehensive plan to meet the specific emission targets through sustainability measures. The Staff Green Team will support the work of the Green Committee as members of the Green Committee's subcommittees.

The **Charleston Green Committee** is comprised of 22 business, academic, nonprofit and government leaders who will advise the City of Charleston in the creation of a local action plan for climate protection and sustainability. The committee is led by James Meadors and staffed by Charleston's Staff Green Team. The Committee is working in 5 subcommittees: Building, Energy, Land Use and Planning, Recycling and Waste Management and Transportation.

Green Committee Mission

Provide **leadership** and practical **solutions** to ensure a prosperous community that will **sustain** healthy lives for our citizens and a healthy **earth**.

Work to **inspire** individuals and organizations, both within and outside City government, to **take actions** that help make Charleston a model of healthy and ecologically sustainable living.

Work with City government, business groups, nonprofit organizations and other partners to **protect** and **enhance** Charleston's distinctive environmental quality and livability.

Green Committee Charge

Create a local action plan on climate change and sustainability

Ready for initial recommendations to City Council by July of 2008 and development of the full plan thereafter

Understand the impact of the City's goal of reducing the City's greenhouse gas emissions by 7% from its 1990 levels by the year 2012

Provide policy recommendations to help achieve the City's goal

To get involved in the Charleston Green Committee's work:

Email charlestongreen@ci.charleston.sc.us

Call 724-3776

Web www.charlestongreen.us

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So Far

- 1989 Adopted policy in Charleston 2000 to plan for effects of sea level rise on the City
- 2000 City Council passed a resolution to participate in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign
- 2001 The City entered into a \$3.9 million performance contract with Johnson Controls to improve the City's infrastructures and support the City's commitment to the Climate Protection Agreement. Saves the city at least \$579,000 per year. Guaranteed that we reduced our CO2 emissions by 57,000 tons.
- 2003 South Carolina Coastal Conservation League completed an "Action Plan on Climate Change" for the City as a result of our participation in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign. This is a baseline emissions inventory report and a list of 14 emissions reduction recommendations the city could take.
- 2005 Mayor Riley signed the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement setting goals for the City of Charleston to reduce our CO2 emissions by 7% below the 1990 levels by the year 2012
- 2006 In partnership with the SC and National Wildlife Federation and the SC Climate Network (made up of a coalition of conservation, farming and business groups) Mayor Riley is co-chairing (with Spartanburg Mayor Bill Barnet) the SC Mayors for Climate and Energy Leadership a bipartisan group of local leaders demanding action from state and federal officials on the issues of energy independence and conservation, alternative fuels and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2007 Formed Charleston Green Committee and Staff Green Team
The first Charleston Green Committee meeting was held October 4, 2007.
- 2007 Created 2006 emissions inventory in preparation for creation of a local action plan which the Staff Green Team and the Green Committee will prepare

What Charleston Is Doing

The City of Charleston, along with over 800 other local governments world-wide, have pledged to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, increase air quality and enhance our overall quality of life and sustainability. Over the past six years the City has taken significant steps toward achieving this goal. They are streamlining our City fleet vehicles by increasing our hybrid fleet and converting to biodiesel compatible vehicles. The City is switching to Energy Efficient LED Traffic and Exit Signs. In addition, in 2006 alone, the City lowered our CO2 levels by 19,000 tons by installing more energy efficient lighting, enhancing the efficiency of our HVAC systems and installing low flow water devices in City buildings. All of these retrofits also benefit the city and its taxpayers in annual energy savings.

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